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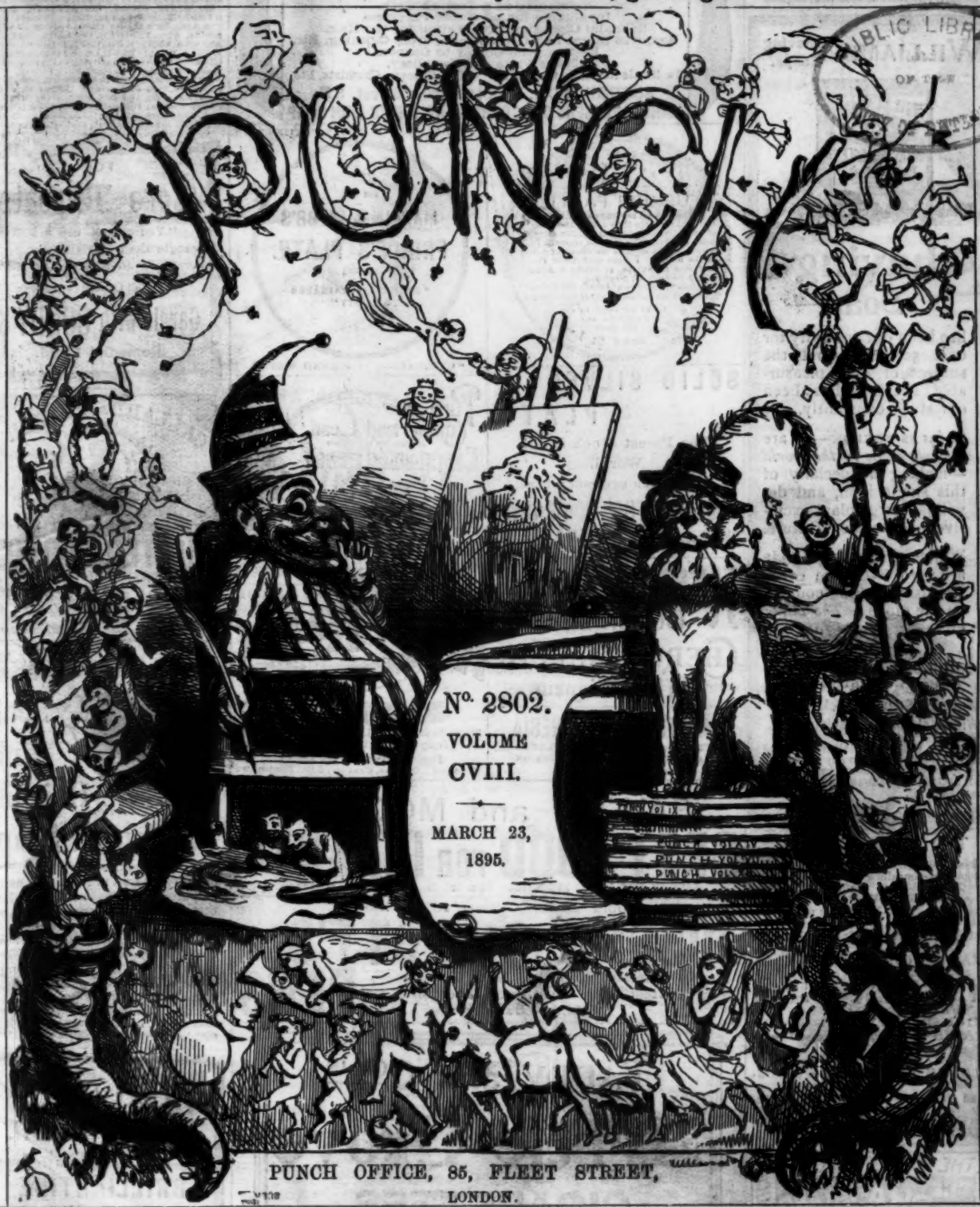

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For SPAIN, SICILY, the ADRIATIC, &c.—The GARONNE, 1,876 tons register, will leave London 20th April, for a 39 days' cruise, visiting CADIZ (for Seville, &c.), TANGIER, MALAGA, PALERMO, ANCONA, VENICE, TRIESTE, RAGUSA, CORFU, MALTA, PHILIPPEVILLE (for Constantine), ALGIERS, GIBRALTAR, arriving at Plymouth on 28th May, and London 29th May.
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TO A BAD SHILLING.

I CONFESS, "when first I saw your
Face," I swore—
One or two mild objurgations,
Nothing more.
When and where I got you I can
Not divine,
All I do know is the fact that
You are mine.
Yes, I *was* an unsuspecting
Sort of muff,
Everybody else suspects you
Fast enough.
Bus-conductors, shopmen, cabbies,
Booking-clerks
All decline you, sometimes adding
Rude remarks:
You have danced on sundry counters,
And advice
Not to "try it on" 's been given me
Once or twice.
Were you not a paltry "bob," but
Half-a-crown,
You might be of use and save a
Nimble "brown":
For you'd find yourself right quickly
In the slot,
Were you of the right dimensions—
But you're not.
I'm beginning to assume a
Hang-dog air,
For I feel my conduct's hardly
"On the square."
Now I leave church early (though I
Get there late),
Lest I may be moved to put you
In the plate!
That last spark of decent feeling
I possess,
But my character you've ruined,
More or less:
So it's time, old pewter shilling,
We should part,
Which—I lose at least a cab-fare—
Breaks my heart.

* * * * *

PRIOR CLAIMS.

Harold. "YES, AUNTIE CONNIE, I DO LOVE YOU VERY MUCH; BUT I LOVE MAMMA BEST." (*Apologetically.*) "YOU SEE I MET HER FIRST!"

There! I've thrown you in the river,
And at last
I can thank my stars devoutly,
You are "passed"!

MORAL.

"Change upon the counter should be
Strictly eyed;
Afterwards mistakes can not be
Rectified."

THE NEW HEN.

(*A Fable.*)

A NEW Hen wandering disconsolately in a country farmyard once made the acquaintance of a cock of the old school, when both fell into some discourse concerning the changes of the modes.

"Ah," said the former, arrogantly addressing the latter, "times are indeed a good deal altered since you were a cockerel, and all for the better, thank goodness! Time was, and not so very long ago either, when I was expected to do nothing save lay eggs and breed chickens: now, however, my mistress must know better than to expect such degrading offices of me, for I will neither lay the one nor breed the other."

The old cock was about to offer some remarks in ridicule of these sentiments, when the housewife came into the yard, and, snatching up the New Hen, wrung her neck, remarking to herself as she did so, that a fowl that could neither lay eggs nor rear chickens, had obviously no place in the economy of nature.

NEW READING.—"A bull in a china shop" may be Latin-Americanised with a considerable amount of truth as "The '*bos*' of the show."

THE MENU A LA MODE.

COME, DAMON, since again we've met
We'll feast right royally to-night,
The groaning table shall be set
With every seasonable delight!
The luscious bivalve . . . I forgot,
The oyster is an arch-deceiver,
And makes its eater's certain lot
A bad attack of typhoid fever.

With soup then, be it thick or clear,
The banquet fitly may commence—
Alas, on second thoughts, I fear
With soup as well we must dispense.
The doctors urge that, in effect,
Soup simply kills the thoughtless glutton,
It's full of germs. I recollect
They say the same of beef and mutton.

Yes, each variety of meat,
As you remark, is much the same,
And we're forbidden now to eat
Fish, oysters, poultry, joint or game.
But though a Nemesis each brings,
The punishment, the doctors tell, is
As nothing to the awful things
Awaiting all who toy with jellies.

"Cheese—that is not condemned with these?"
Yet ample evidence we find
To make us, DAMON, look on cheese
As simply poison to mankind;
While those who may desire to pass
Immediately o'er Charon's ferry,
Have but to take a daily glass
Of claret, hock, champagne or sherry.

And therefore, DAMON, you and I,
Who fain would live a year at least,
Reluctantly must modify
The scope of our projected feast;
A charcoal biscuit we will share,
Water (distilled, of course,) we'll swallow,
Since this appears the only fare
On which destruction will not follow!

SHAKSPEARE REVISED BY AN ALDERMAN.

"MAY I ask," said the worthy Alderman DAVIES, and he might have added, "I ask because '*DAVIES sum, non Œdipus*'"—but he didn't, and it was a chance lost, "what salary you [the witness under examination] received for this conduct of yours while secretary?" To which witness answered, "£500 a year, and a bonus of £200." Whereupon the Alderman remarked, "Then all I can say is, you could have got many honest men to do the work for much less."

Quite so, Mr. Alderman, true for you; but if a man will act honestly for a sovereign, what might not the addition of ten shillings do? It ought to make him more honest comparatively, while another ten shillings would make him superlatively honest. But how if there were an obligation attached to the increase? Just a trifling deviation out of the straight course to begin with, to oblige a patron?

Let honesty be the drug in the market, and the rare herb dishonesty will be at a premium. It is gratifying to be assured, on aldermanic authority, that SHAKSPEARE was wrong, and that in future for *Hamlet's* well-known dictum, "For to be honest as this world goes is to be as one man picked out of ten thousand," we must read "For to be dishonest as this world goes is to be as one man picked out of ten thousand."

Happy Alderman DAVIES! In what paradisiacal pastures must he have moved and breathed and earned his livelihood!

CIRCLING THE SQUARE.

STANDING awhile at the corner crossing,
Watching a van as it lumbers past,
Something impels me to turn and saunter
Down to the Square, where I met you last.
Down to the Square with its formal garden
Slowly I pace—yet I scarce know why;
Somehow I never have since been near it,
Things have all changed since last July!

There is the gate, where you fumbled sadly
Turning the key—though I lent my aid—
There are the paths, where we strolled in sunshine,
There is our seat in the chestnut shade.
Borders all empty, and paths uncared for,
Bleak, bare branches, and murky sky—
This is the "garden I love" no longer,
How it has changed since last July!

All that we spoke of, or left unspoken,
All that our tongues or our eyes could say
Comes to me now, as the Square I circle,
Clear as events but of yesterday.
Vain to remember, to care still vainer,
You have been married a month, and I—
I'm a misogynist—just at present,
How we have changed since last July!

"FULL SPEED AHEAD!"

Britannia (to Lord Spencer).

To "hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn,"
My Spencer, in *this* clear determined manner,
Is spirit-gladdening; showing you were born
To back my power and upbear my banner!

"FULL SPEED AHEAD!"

["The essential thing is that the party now in office has loyally followed the example of the party in opposition, and, 'neglecting party considerations, and provincial interests, has,' as the Civil Lord claimed for it, 'risen to the full height of its Imperial responsibilities.'"—*The "Times" on the Navy Estimates.*]

Britannia (*cheerily*). To "hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn,"
My SPENCER, in *this* clear determined manner,
Is spirit-gladdening; showing you were born
To back my power and upbear my banner!
Triton-Spencer. You do me proud, Ma'am!
Rootle-tootle-too!
Foghorns not in it, eh? As for those sirens!—
Aha! Ulysses made a great to-do,
But by the blue brine that your coast environs
Our marine music beats 'em out of sight!
Britannia. Especially now you blare so well together
You rival conch-performers. Ah! that's right.
Now I'm prepared for any sort of weather!

Triton-Spencer sings:—

BRITANNIA's Sea-Lady-in-Chief,
Rootle-toot!
And I'm her First Lord, and a ripper.
Our chumminess passes belief,
Rootle-toot!
Lor! When she appointed me skipper
Some fancied I'd dawdle—at least, so they said—
[Ahead!
Now they see that my motto is—Full Speed

GEORGIE HAMILTON there with his glass,
Rootle-toot!
Would spy out the flaws if there were any:
EDDARD REED wouldn't let blunders pass,
Rootle-toot!
They're critical coves, and won't spare any.
But bless 'em, their scrutiny *I* do not dread.
My motto, you see, Ma'am, is—Full Speed Ahead!

Of course, that won't do in a fog,
Rootle-toot!
But I think there's a clear course afore us!
Give way to old-fashioned jig-jog?
Rootle-toot!
Nay, not by the mothers who bore us!
With a sharpish look-out, but without stint or dread,
We blow up our horn, Ma'am, for—Full Speed Ahead!

Old Nep may regard us with glee,
Rootle-toot!
Amphitrite may shout an "Ahoy," Ma'am.
If you're still on for Ruling the Sea,—
Rootle-toot!
To back you in that I'm the bhoy, Ma'am.
By my heart ('tis true blue), by my beard (it is red),
My motto, BRITANNIA, is—Full Speed Ahead!

Britannia. Bravo, my ruddy-bearded, brave old Triton!
Nep shouts approval from his deep-sea grotto.
Friends need not fear for me, foes shall not frighten,
While you, and all my sons, stick to that motto!

A PARLIAMENTARY PARADOX.—Sir ELLIS ASHMEAD-BARTLETT (*alias* "SILOMIO") begs the Government to suppress the Boers.

CONVALESCENT.—After "a bout" of influenza, the best thing for the patient is to be "about again."

A FIN-DE-SIÈCLISM!

LENT.

Sunday Visitor. "IS MRS. BROWN AT HOME?"
Servant. "NO, SIR. MRS. BROWN IS PLAYING LAWN-TENNIS NEXT DOOR."
Sunday Visitor. "ARE THE *YOUNG LADIES* AT HOME?"
Servant. "NO, SIR; THEY ARE AT CHURCH!"

MY PARTNER.

YOU would not guess which one I mean,
Sweet girl in white, sweet girl in green.
Perhaps not either, do you think
O even sweeter girl in pink?
It's just as well I should not tell
Which seemed the belle, sweet girl in pink.

So, safely vague, I simply say
Her face was fair, her laugh was gay.
A lively dance with her would cure
The worst of human ills, I'm sure.
Her pretty face would soon replace
The saddest case with health I'm sure.

A cripple, if he had the chance,
Would try undoubtedly to dance;
The dullest fool, the saddest cur,
Might both be charmed to dance with her;
And here's a tip, don't let it slip,
To cure *la grippe* just dance with her.

The other two might like me less
If I described the charmer's dress;
I will not name a single stitch
To show which of them may be which;
Pink, white or green, each one has seen
That I must mean *she* may bewitch.

THE ORIGINAL ARYAN TO THE PROFESSOR.

I am the Ancient Aryan,
And you have done me wrong—
I did not come from Hindostan,
I've been here all along.

I never travelled from the East
In huge successive waves.
You'll find your ancestors deceased
Inside your own old caves.

There my remains may now be sought,
Mixed up with mastodons,
Which very long with flints I fought
Before I fought with bronze.

In simple skins I wrapped me round,
Ere mats I learned to make;
I dug my dwellings in the ground,
Or reared them on a lake.

I had no pen—I'm sure of this,
Although you say I penned
All manner of theologies
In Sanskrit and in Zend!

My nature you've misunderstood.
When first I sojourned here,
I worshipped chunks of stone or wood,
My rites were rather queer!

The more my little ways you scan
The less you'll care to praise
And bless the dear old Aryan
Of Neolithic days.

They've mixed me up, till I declare
I hardly can report
Whether I first was tall and fair,
Or I was dark and short.

But on two things I take my stand,
Through all their noise and strife,
I didn't come from Asia; and
I *had* no Higher Life!

THE TIP OBLIQUE.

Verger (to over-generous Visitor). "I beg your pardon, Sir. No Gratuities—er—at present. But—er—the Dean will have passed in Two Minutes, Sir!"

THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

Scene—*Author at his desk, with Newspaper Cuttings before him.*

Author.

"'The Critics' comments I'll peruse,
And I will profit by;
I'll find out what they most abuse,
And strive to rectify."

First Critic.

"His work unequal as we read,
We think upon the whole
This author almost would succeed
If nearer to his goal."

Second Critic.

"His serious pages suit us well,
Revealing thought and heart;
But he is quite unbearable
When trying to be smart!"

Third Critic.

"Some sprightly pages from his pen
With pleasure we have read;
But if he moralises, *then*
He's heavier than lead!"

Fourth Critic.

"We by the eye of faith can see—
It isn't from his books—
He is not such a fool as he
Invariably looks."

Fifth Critic.

"This author's pages needs must
A sympathetic mind,— [thrill
Of subtle knowledge, tender skill,
Deep pathos, wit refined."

Sixth Critic.

"A mass of folly more intense
Experience can't recall.
We tried to find one shred of sense.
There is not one at all!"

[*Exit Author, tearing his hair.*

THE SONG OF THE SLUGGARD.

["A medical contemporary (*The British Medical Journal*) asserts that 'The desire to rise early, except in those trained from youth to outdoor pursuits, is commonly a sign, not of strength of character and vigour of body, but of advancing age.'"—*Daily Telegraph.*]

'Twas the voice of the sluggard, I heard him hooray
As he turned in his bed at the dawning of day;
"*At last* early rising—that fraud—is found out!
Henceforth prigs will leave me alone, I've no doubt!

"They've preached at me ever since Solomon's time,
And no doubt before it, in prose and in rhyme.
Yet truth *will* prevail, and now Science hath said
That for early morning there's no place like bed!

"With their early to bed and their early to rise,
They've tortured the good, and tormented the wise.
In sermons, and spelling-books, proverbs and tracts,
And now they just find they've mistaken the facts!

"It's just like those moralists! Talk stilted bosh
For an eon or two, and then find it won't wash!
Lord! how they have stuck up their noses, the prigs,
And compared us to sloths and to somnolent pigs.

"What price now the ant, and that huge bore the bee?
Whilst our old foe, the lark, proves pure fiddle-de-dee.
Their healthy, and wealthy, and wise, and what not,
Is exploded at last; it is all tommy-rot!

"A man's *not* a black-beetle, to find it a lark
To go crawling about chilly rooms in the dark;
And if you must rise in the gloom and the cold,
The fact only proves that *you're foolish or old!*

"No more, then, need man feel constrained in the least
To turn out like an insect, a bird, or a beast;
For Medical Science has spoken, and said
That the sluggard is right, and there's no place like bed!"

[*Curls up, and snores with a clear conscience.*

THE DRAMATIC COMMON SENSER-SHIP.

Last week the name of Mr. Redford as newly-appointed Licenser of Plays was announced. This is just to the late Licenser's assistant and deputy. But if the office is to be continued, why should it not be thrown open to competitive examination? A paper of such questions as the following would secure a learned Theban for the office:—

1. Who was the Licenser of Plays in the time of Shakspeare?
2. Translate passages (given) from (α) French dramatists, (β) Italian, (γ) German, (δ) Spanish, (ε) Norwegian, (ζ) Russian, (η) Japanese.
3. Translate passages (given) from the works of English dramatists into the above-mentioned languages.
4. Give your opinion on the following "situations" and "plots," and say whether you consider it in the interests of public morality that they should be licensed for performance or not.
5. State your reasons for such opinions.
6. Is it your opinion that an officer of the Licensing (Play) Department should be in attendance every night at every theatre (a stall being kept for him by the manager on pain of fine or forfeiture of licence) to note if any change or any introduction be made in the dialogue or in any part or portion of the play already licensed? And if not, why not?
7. Would it be, or not, advisable in your opinion that every author, or all the authors when collaborating, should read their own pieces aloud to the Licenser, giving as much action and dramatic illustration as space will allow? And that the low comedians and eccentric comedians, male and female, with songs and dances, should attend, and show (*a*) what steps they propose taking in the new piece, (*b*) what words, (*c*) winks, (*d*) becks, and (*e*) wreathed smiles they intend giving in order to point an innuendo or adorn an apparently harmless joke?
8. Do you think that, as an assistant judge on such occasions, one or more experts (at so much an hour) should be present?
9. (*a*) In your opinion should not every play be *seen* by the Licenser, duly acted, with the costumes, before a licence can be granted? (*b*) and then that the licence be granted only on the condition that no alteration in word or action be made at any time, and under no pretence whatever, during the run, on pain of forfeiture of licence?

The above suggestions will serve as a foundation for some future Licensing Exam.-paper.

COURTLY QUADRUPEDS.

(*To the Editor of the "Sp-ct-tor."*)

SIR,—I am sure you will be glad to have another veracious story about Animal Etiquette. During the recent frost we hung a bone up in the garden for the starving birds to peck at, and one of our dogs—a collie—was mean enough to steal it. Next day we noticed him limping, and were surprised to find a great gash across one of his paws. I at once understood what had happened. Our other dogs had evidently thought stealing the bone under the circumstances was very bad form, *and the collie had been cut by them!*

Yours sympathetically,
PARISH PUMP.

SIR,—I find that even kittens have a code of etiquette, and understand the niceties of social rank. The other day our kitten was on the table, when a winged creature which I took for a fly settled just in front of it. Pussy immediately gracefully retreated backwards till, on arriving at the edge, she slid to the ground. At first I put down her behaviour to fright, but it was nothing of the sort. It was a pure act of courtesy. *The supposed fly was a lady-bird!* Our intelligent little animal had shown her instinctive respect for title and sex, which was naturally very gratifying to an ardent

PRIMROSE LEAGUER.

SIR,—Our terrier killed a rat yesterday. To-day we saw him, for no obvious reason, approach the rat-hole again. We all agreed that he must be paying a visit of condolence to the bereaved relatives!

COUNTRY CUSS.

CLASSICAL CAB STRIKE AT ATHENS.

["Tourists and foreigners . . . in Athens have been put to great inconvenience on account of the cab strike."—*Standard, March* 14.]

"THE PROPOSED COMMONS PRESERVATION BILL."—Seeing this heading to an article, an eminently well-informed Conservative politician, whose zeal was in excess of his knowledge, exclaimed, "Ah! I thought it would come to this! The Ultra-Radicals are not going straight for the abolition of the Upper House, but have decided on undermining it, by doing away with the Lower One to begin with. Fancy its being necessary for the Commons to bring in a Bill for their own self-preservation!!"

VADE MECUM FOR A CERTAIN COURT OFFICIAL.

Question. Your duty, I believe, is to protect the public from receiving impressions—from your point of view—of a pernicious character?

Answer. Certainly; and this I accomplish by reading and rejecting what I think the public should avoid.

Q. How long has the office been in existence?

A. About a century or so.

Q. How did the public get on before your office came into existence?

A. Fairly well, especially in the days of SHAKSPEARE.

Q. Had the Bard of Avon to obtain a licence for the production of his plays?

A. No; they were then practically edited by the public.

Q. Could not the public edit plays in the reign of Queen VICTORIA with the intelligence displayed in the days of "Good Queen BESS"?

A. It is impossible to say, as the question has not been tested by experiment.

Q. You say that your duty is to preserve the purity of the public taste; was that also the object of the earlier of your predecessors?

A. Seemingly not, as the office was called into existence to serve as a bar to the dissemination of opinions of an entirely political character.

Q. But that is not now the *raison d'être* of the appointment?

A. Oh, no; for nowadays, thanks to the newspapers, politics enjoys free trade.

Q. But still, the right of interference exists?

A. Yes, but it is only used to prevent a performer from "making up" as a Cabinet Minister, to the annoyance of the right hon. gentleman favoured with the attention.

Q. Is there any rule to guide the use of the official blue pencil?

A. None in particular. That emblem of concrete authority may be diligently used for a decade, and then be laid aside for a quarter of a century.

Q. Then there is no policy in the office?

A. None to speak of. What was wrong in 1875 may be right in 1895, and may be wrong again at the commencement of the next century.

Q. But surely such an office has not gained the entire applause of the London Press?

A. On the contrary, the all but universal condemnation.

Q. And yet when the office became vacant there were many journalistic applicants?

A. Because journalists accept the situation of the hour, and make the best of it.

Q. Is it possible that the candidates who have failed may find their objection to the existence of the office stronger than ever?

A. It is not only possible, but probable.

Q. And thus any non-journalist who accepts the appointment may not have a very pleasant time of it?

A. So it would appear to the casual observer.

MY INFLUENZA.

Monday.—This is the day I promised to go with my aunt to the first meeting of that new Society for the Propagation of Female Suffrage amongst the Turks. Wish I'd never promised. Don't see how I can escape. Why, yes, good idea—the influenza! I'll have it. Almost fancy I have a slight pain in my back, which would certainly be a symptom. I will decide that I have a pain in my back. Send note, saying, in uncertain weather caution is necessary; fear that I'm attacked by the prevailing epidemic; wish every success to the good cause, and so forth. Then, relieved in my mind, down to the club, and forget all about the old lady.

Tuesday.—Shall have a melancholy time this evening. Mrs. POGSON's At Home, with recitations. Oh lord! Daren't offend old POGSON by refusing. It would not be so bad if there were not the five Miss POGSONS. Of all the awful, middle-aged young women——! Ha, by Jove! Never thought of it Of course. The influenza. Telegraph at once. Deeply regret, illness, and so forth. I really have a slight pain in my back. Wonder what it is. Put on my thickest coat when I go out.

Wednesday. — Awful joke this influenza. Shall escape old BLODGETT's dinner to-night. Should have been bored to death. Now sixpenny telegram settles it all. The only thing is I really have a pain in my back. Reminds me of boy crying "Wolf" in the fable. Shall stay in this evening, and keep warm by the fire.

Thursday.—Do not feel much worse, but pain still there. Shall not venture out. Can therefore, quite truthfully, excuse my absence from BOREHAM's *matinée*. Good enough fellow, BOREHAM, but can't write a tragedy at all. So shall escape the awful infliction of his mixed imitation of IBSEN and SHELLEY. The worst of it is that, with this beastly pain in my back, I begin to think my influenza is no sham at all. Stop in all day in warm room. In the evening feel headache, as well as pain in back. Fear the worst.

Friday.—No doubt about it. In bed. Must see the doctor. Letter from GADSBY. Wants me to go to the theatre to-night. Jolly party. Supper after at his house. Little dance to finish with. Jolly, lively fellow GADSBY. Knows lots of pretty actresses, and has all sorts of larks. Would have been good fun. And here am I in bed! Hang the influenza! But cannot risk anything. Get JONES fetched—JONES, M.D., my old chum. Tell him how I feel, and say I have the influenza. "Bosh!" says he, "you've been sitting in a draught somewhere, and got a little lumbago in your back. It's nothing. And you've stuck in a hot room till you've got a headache for want of fresh air. Get up and go out as soon as you can." Feel better already. Show him GADSBY's letter. "The very thing," says he; "I'm going. We'll go together. With that influenza of yours, you oughtn't to go out without someone to watch the case."

THE "SEXO-MANIA."

"We think *Lips that have Gone Astray* the foulest novel that ever yet defiled the English tongue; and that in absolute filth its Author can give any modern French writer six and beat him hollow!"—*The Parthenon.*

Fair Author (*to her Publisher, pointing to above Opinion of the Press quoted in his advertisement of her Novel*). "And pray, Mr. Shardson, what do you mean by inserting *this* hideous Notice?"

Publisher. 'My dear Miss Fitzmorse, you must remember that we've paid you a large Price for your Book, and brought it out at great Expense—and we naturally wish to Sell it!"

THE EASY CHAIR;

Or, Mr. Speaker's Valediction.

["According to present arrangements the Speaker will deliver his valedictory address on the eve of the adjournment for the Easter recess." *The Times.*]

Air—"*The Cane-bottom'd Chair.*"

Ah-h-h-h!!! Farewell to *the* Chair, to the Mace, to the Bar!
To tedious twaddle and purposeless jar!—
Away from the House, and its toils, and its cares,
I hope to sit snug in my snuggest of chairs.

To mount that old Chair was my pride, to be sure;
But—the House got ill-mannered, its air grew impure:
And the sights I have seen there on many a day
Were worthy a lot of young Yahoos at play.

Ah! yet that old Chamber had corners and nooks,
Which seemed haunted by friendly, familiar old spooks.
The Gosseits, O'Gormans, and Gladstones! All ends!
But escaping old bothers means missing old friends.

Old chums, like old china, though possibly cracked,
With rickety tempers, and wits broken-backed,
Old memory treasures. And when shall men see
Such champions as Dizzy and W. G.?

No better divan need young Abbas require
Than this snug Easy Chair well drawn up to the fire.
Off robes! Wig avaunt! Now I'm cosy!—And yet,
If there's something to gladden, there's much to regret.

Why is it one clings to some genial old scamp?
Why is it one sticks to a worn-out old gamp?
Why is it, despite my relief, I feel drawn
To that hard high-backed Chair I so long sat upon?

Long, long through the hours, and the night, and the chimes
Have I sat, yawned and ached in the tiresome old times,
When faction and fog filled the House, and for me
The Chamber was pitiless pur-ga-to-ree!

Now comfort and quiet will gladden my rest,
And tedium no longer will torture my breast,
For that finest of Seats ever padded with hair
I am going to exchange for my own Easy Chair!

If Chairs had but speech it would whisper alarms
To him who's next clasped in its stuffy old arms.
How long there *I* languished, and lolled in despair—
Till I wished myself wood like the rest of "the Chair!"

A decade and more since I first filled the place! *
There's many a form and there's many a face
Have vanished since I donned the wig of grey hair,
And sat and looked stately, at ease in that Chair.

Men say I have honoured that Chair ever since,
With the poise of a judge and the mien of a prince.
Perhaps! But I'm weary, and glad, I declare,
To make now a change to my own Easy Chair.

When the candles burn low, and the company's gone,
In the silence of night I shall sit here alone,
Or with you, *Mr. Punch*, many-memoried pair,
And muse on old days in that high Speaker's Chair!

Eh? What, *Mr. Punch?* Read me last night's debate?
Oho! Order! Order!! I'm drowsy, 'tis late.
For Ayes and for Noes, *Punch*, no more need I care;
I may take forty winks in my own Easy Chair!

[*Left taking 'em.*

* Mr. Arthur Wellesley Peel was elected Speaker at the opening of the Session of 1884, upon the retirement of Sir Henry Brand.

Ancient Custom.—"A quaint practice exists" at the Episcopal Palace, Fulham, "of waking up the domestics by means of a long pole." "Stirring them up," apparently, as the keepers do the beasts at the Zoo. *The Sun* reminds us of the existence of "*rousing staves*" for waking sleepers in church. About Regatta time riparian dwellers are frequently disturbed in their slumbers by "rousing staves," which, however, are sung by jolly young watermen, canoeists and house-boaters.

RETIREMENT; OR, THE EASY CHAIR.

Mr. P. "WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO READ YOU LAST NIGHT'S DEBATE, SIR?" Rt. Hon. Arthur Wellesley Peel (*drowsily*). "ORDER! ORDER!!"

["The original arrangement that Mr. Peel shall retire on the eve of the Easter holidays still holds good."—*Times, March* 16.]

"WELL, HOW DID THE NEW PLAY GO OFF LAST NIGHT?"
"OH, THERE WAS A SLEEP-WALKING SCENE IN THE THIRD ACT THAT WAS RATHER EFFECTIVE." "*À LA LADY MACBETH*, EH?"
"WELL—NOT EXACTLY. IT WAS THE AUDIENCE THAT GOT UP IN ITS SLEEP AND WALKED OUT!"

TO A FLIRTGIRL.

A Poem of Platitude.

YES, girls will be girls, and flirts will be flirts,
And coquette to the end of the chapter!
"There's safety in numbers," the proverb asserts,
And I'm sure that no saw could be apter.

The safety, I fear, is that DICK will fight shy,
When he hears that you're flirting with HARRY;
And HARRY will think, when you've TOM in your eye,
That you're safer to flirt with than marry!

Nay, then you don't rest till you've JACK at your feet,
Till he finds that he's WILLY for rival;
The odds are that both, like the rest, will retreat,
And at last there'll be *no* one's survival.

For flirting's a game that is risky to play,
At least from the standpoint of wedlock;
When each is afraid your affection will stray
To some other, the end is a deadlock!

THE BOOT WAR.—"In consequence of the strike," observed Mrs. R., "I am afraid a great many hardworking men will be left with boots on their hands."

CHECK!

"We air governed too much."—*Artemus Ward.*

No! The old spirit is not dead,
Though long it, trance-like, slept,
While Peter Putright reared his head,
And venom'd vigil kept.

Their despot yearnings retrograde
Our tyrants label "Progress";
In specious robes of light array'd
They hide a horrid Ogress;

And many simple souls and true
By guile seduced to err,
Or fondly trusting something new,
Fell down and worshipp'd her.

And o'er their prostrate senses roll'd
A monstrous idol car,
Whose priests, in frenzy uncontroll'd,
Still know not where they are.

The doughtier freeman of the past
With wrath such bondage sees;
Who freedom won with pike and gun
From nobler foes than these.

Some bygone champions' pow'r benign
Our waning strength restores;
They forced from kings what we'd resign
To County Councillors.

The heirs of those who won our right
Inherit such a soul
They'd starkly fight by day and night,
But quite neglect to poll.

And so, in Law and Order's day
The brazen crew intrudes,
And London nigh becomes the prey
Of pedants, prigs, and prudes.

But lo! the slip 'twixt cup and lip
Has made their glory dimmer;
Down, down goes the dictatorship
Of *Stiggins* and of *Trimmer*.

And threaten'd London joys to find
The Incubus o'erthrown,
The gang whose mandate 'tis to mind
All business but their own.

With "shoulders to the wheel" alway,
The grannies in a batch
Can suck such comfort as they may
From eggs they must not hatch.

A SUGGESTION FOR IMPROVING THE STAGE.—M. COQUELIN for having played truant—not an absolutely new part for him—from the House of MOLIÈRE has been condemned by the Court of Appeal to pay five hundred francs every time he performs away from the Comédie Française. This may, or may not, be hard on M. COQUELIN, an artist whose absence from the stage would be much deplored: but could not there be, in England, some Court of Public Appeal, empowered to condemn an actor or two, *not* artists like M. COQUELIN, in similar penalties for appearing at all? Great opportunity for a new court and new procedure. Witnesses for prosecution from stalls, dress circle, gallery, pit, upper boxes. Witnesses to be heard in defence of course also; and let the best evidence win.

A GOOD BANK NOTE.—After the recent meeting of the gentlemen who manage the affairs of The Old Lady of Threadneedle Street, the Bank of England may now be considered not as a bank which may be of sand or mud, but as a rock, and as firm. The Baring Straits having been safely passed, the look-out man cries, "All's well that ends well!"

THE HIGHLY-ROUGED LADY'S CLAIM TO LITERARY DISTINCTION.—That she is well-read.

"ANIMAL SPIRITS."

No. VIII.—After the Influenza.

LETTERS FROM THE SHADES.

Have just perused report of Commission on Library Wall-flowers. Appears that enterprising book-shop, resort of fashionable world for past century, has sent round urgent whip to Representative Men of Letters (and also Mr. Le Gallienne) asking for short list of best neglected books. Find that answers cover fairly wide ground, from Homer to New English Dictionary. Feeling that it might please general public to have some expression of opinion from various defunct authors described with faint praise as undeservedly neglected, and finding it inconvenient to arrange personal interview, by reason of distance and other difficulties, have sent out circular requesting that they would interview themselves on the subject and kindly let me have result. Some answered evasively through secretaries. Subjoin small assortment from letters of those who responded frankly:—

Homer obliges with a few Hexameters.

Lo! in the hollows of Hades I hear the lamenting of Lubbock,
Bart., who declares that Homerus (or somebody else of the same name,
One or the other, or both, or perhaps a collection of poets)—
Lubbock, I say, who declares that the sale of my poems is paltry,
Says he is sorry to see me reduced to the state of a wall-flower!
But as a matter of fact I have got an immense circulation,
Chiefly in Oxford and Cambridge and Eton and other *palæstræ*.
Sophocles pushes me close, but Pindar is out of the running,
Being a bit too stiff, though the cost is defrayed by the parents.
As for the rest, I consider Herodotus very deserving;
Quaintly enough at this moment I see he is writing about me,
Writing to say he considers Homerus exceedingly clever.
Who, by the way, is a Mr. Le Gallienne? He, as they tell me,
Prattles a lot on his private affairs for the good of the public.

Herodotus forwards a trifling Brochure.

To me for my part it appears that of the other poets, both those before and after, no one, as the saying is, can hold a two-penny torch to Homerus. He, in the language of the Far-Western people, whips cosmos. But of those that write things not to be mentioned, no Then Man dwelling in the nether world can surpass the Now Woman. So at least they that are over the book-market tell me; but them I cannot easily believe. Further, to speak of such as collect history, but, being unworthy indeed of neglect do yet escape the notice of those that appoint to office, I give the front row to Mr. Oscar Browning.

Shakspeare sends an occasional Sonnet.

Had I survived my well-contented age
And lived to see the bettering of the times,
And witnessed Henry Arthur on the stage,
Or read the latest confidential rhymes;

Small marvel were it that my tragic art
Should lapse among a race of larger build;
Or that the sonnet-echoes of my heart
Should fail before the booming Bodley guild.

Yet have I lovers still, a faithful few;
And here I take occasion for observing
How greatly I have been indebted to
The Cambridge Locals and to Mr. Irving.

Post-script.—The Temple Shakspeare for the pocket
Is selling now; I know of none to knock it.

Lord Verulam kindly quotes himself.

You shall not ask better from me than that I should distil you these two extracts from my Standard Essays, amended to date.

1. *Of Studies.*—Reading, and namely of the kitchen ware of Autolycus, maketh a full man; reviewing maketh a puffy man; and my *New Organ*, now old and strangely unpopular, maketh an harmonious man.

2. *Of Gardens.*—Very delightful for sweetness is the Wall-flower; likewise the Bonny Briar-Patch. But of those flowers such as the Aster and the Carnation, of which the perfume is such that they are best trodden upon and bruised, there is yet another that you shall take heed of. It is the Sweet Earl Lavender. You shall pass by a whole alley of them and find nothing of their sweetness: they are like precocious odours, most desirable when incensed or crushed.

Sortes Shakspearianæ.

Shakspeare in the Commons—

"God speed the Parliament! Who shall be the Speaker?"
Henry the Sixth, Part I., Act iii., Sc. 2.

A Forgotten Melody.—A once popular negro song that might come in as a chorus if Mr. Bannerman does *not* accept the Speakership, is to the tune of "*Old Bob Ridley, O!*" and could be evidently neatly adapted to "O White Ridley, O!"

SITTING ON HIM.

Mr. Slowman Sopht. "OH COME, I SAY, MISS MAWY, YOU ON FOOT! WHY, IF HOUNDS RUN, A FELLAH 'LL NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN ALL DAY!"

Miss Mary. "DEAR, DEAR, HOW TRYING IT IS! BECAUSE, YOU KNOW, WHEN *I RIDE* AND HOUNDS RUN, I NEVER SEEM TO SEE *YOU* AGAIN ALL DAY!"

AWFUL REVELATIONS!

[Mr. LESLIE STEPHEN, speaking at Toynbee Hall the other day, stated that the members of the Athenæum had deserted the classics for the pages of *Punch* and the latest French novel.]

SCENE—*The Library of a well-known Club, where are discovered a few Bishops, Judges, M.P.'s, and other persons "distinguished in literature or art."*

Academician (*chuckling over* MARCEL PRÉVOST'S *latest audacity, to* M.P., *who is puzzling out the "Journal du prince" in* DAUDET'S "*La Petite Paroisse*"). I say, old man, lend me your pocket dictionary for a moment, will you?

M.P. Certainly; only it doesn't give half the words. (*Sighs, aside.*) Why didn't I learn more French at Eton! These *mœurs conjugales* beat me every now and then at the most interesting point!

A Professor of Metaphysics (*who has concealed* J. H. ROSNY'S "*Renouveau*" *behind a file of the* "*Times*," *and is sitting on* LAVEDAN'S "*Les Marionettes*," *to himself*). I really cannot go home till I have cleared up the relations between *Chagny* and *Madame d'Argonne!*

A Judge (*caught reading* "*Le Mariage de Chiffon*" *by a Bishop, apologetically*). Ah, I find my French gets rusty without systematic daily practice. Why, would you believe it, I found yesterday I had forgotten what *en gogustles* meant!

Bishop. Ahem, I believe it is a synonym for *en ribots*, with nearly the vulgar connotation of *gris* or *soûl*—tipsy, you know! (*Hastily, to* Waiter, *aware that he has displayed a rather too close acquaintance with Gallic slang.*) Kindly fetch me to-day's number of *Punch*.

Waiter. They are all engaged, my Lord.

Bishop. Then let me look at last week's issue again.

Head Master of Public School (*dubiously*). Dare I be seen with *Madame Chrysanthème?* (*Noticing that all the quiet corners are occupied with students of French literature.*) No—another time!

Leading Novelist. Here's LESLIE STEPHEN been betraying us! He says, what is only too true, that we've abandoned the standard authors, including myself, for *Punch!*

Cabinet Minister (*as a deus ex machinâ*). Well, *Mr. Punch* is a classic. To read him is a liberal education!

[*They do so, with a general sigh of relief.*

ESSENCE OF PARLIAMENT.

EXTRACTED FROM THE DIARY OF TOBY, M.P.

House of Commons, Monday Night, March 11.—A great cloud fallen over House to-day. Soon the stately presence that fills the Chair will step forth, never to return. The sonorous voice that can still the storm in its angriest mood will no more resound through the hushed Chamber. The best Speaker the House of Commons in its long history has known, will be merged in the mediocrity of the House of Lords. A hard succession of blows to fall on an assembly. First Mr. G., then GRANDOLPH, and now ARTHUR PEEL, three men of wholly varied type, each unique, in his way reaching the highest level.

Suppose we shall get along somehow, though for all concerned in business of House, in maintaining its usefulness and supporting its dignity, the future without PEEL in the Chair not to be regarded without foreboding. He has every quality and gift that go to make the ideal Speaker. A noble presence, a fine voice, a courtly manner, a resolute will, a full knowledge of the forms of the House, a keen though decently suppressed sense of humour—a scholar and a gentleman. These things are seen and recognised from outside. Only those who live and work in the House of Commons know how marvellous is the combination, how infinite in its magnitude the loss impending.

Tuesday.—Talk to-night all about successor to the SPEAKER. A dozen names mentioned; general conclusion that whoever may be selected, he's not to be envied. The Member for SARK, turning up to-night for first time this Session, brings strange news. Has been on the Riviera, daily expecting influenza. Saw Mr. G. yesterday; the talk at Cap Martin, as here, all about the soon-to-be emptied Chair, and who is to fill it. SARK tells me he is quite certain Mr. G. is thinking of coming forward as candidate; is (so SARK says, and he is a most reliable person) evidently eating out his heart in voluntary retirement. Now he's got his Psalter out, doesn't know what to do next.

"I asked him," SARK says, "whether there was any precedent for an ex-Prime Minister, however young in years and untamed in energy, becoming Speaker."

"Not exactly," he said; "but there is the case of a Speaker who

became Prime Minister. ADDINGTON, you will remember, Speaker in 1789, was Premier at the turn of the century. It was said of him, by the way, that he never quite overcame the force of old habits. When engaged with the Cabinet in consideration of foreign affairs he had difficulty in refraining from saying 'The French to the right, the Austrians to the left.' Don't see why the case shouldn't be taken the other way about, and an ex-Premier become Speaker. Fancy I may take it that I have some qualifications for the post. Know the House pretty intimately; have been familiar with it for some years. Am told I never looked so picturesque as when, on public occasions, I wore official gown of Chancellor of Exchequer. Think the Speaker's dress would suit me. But that a mere trifle. What I hanker after, at my time of life, at the close of a career not absolutely free from hard work, is some post not too arduous. Seems to me the Speakership would be the very thing; just enough to do, and not too much."

Mr. G. (disguised in Speaker's wig and gown). "Rather fancy the costume would suit me down to the ground!"

If it had been anyone but SARK had said this, would have listened with incredulity. But SARK most respectable man.

Business done.—ROBERTSON in excellent speech explained Navy Estimates.

Thursday.—The Silence of SILOMIO. No, it's not the title of a novel. You're thinking of the late Dean MAITLAND. This quite another story; equally tragic. Came about this way. House met to deal with Army Estimates. CAWMEL-BANNERMAN in his place, after ten days in his bedroom with a cold. The cold must have had most amusing companion, that is if CAWMEL was as pawky with it as he was to-night with the semi-military horde led by Private HANBURY, who swooped down and barred approach to Committee. These deployed in the open; placed their amendments on the paper. House knew what to expect. Never suspected SILOMIO in ambush.

As soon as questions over, plot disclosed. COCHRANE, a harmless, perhaps necessary, man, put up to move adjournment, in order to discuss the Swazi question. That in itself a stroke of genius. Had SILOMIO personally moved, game would have seemed too stale. Probability is forty Members not been found to stand up in support of motion. Looks much better to have such action taken on one side of House and supported from the other; invests it with air of impartiality and unanimity. On challenge from the SPEAKER, Conservatives rose in body to support COCHRANE's request. Having secured that object, and being on their legs, they strolled out, leaving SQUIRE OF MALWOOD, SYDNEY BUXTON, and about a score of others all told, to listen to COCHRANE's urgent message. Amongst them sat FRANK LOCKWOOD, with tender gleam in eyes that roamed with curious intentness about Speaker's chair.

Whilst COCHRANE spoke, SILOMIO sat with inspired look on his face, making voluminous notes. He would come on by-and-by. Let others keep the thing going as long as possible; just when hapless Ministers thought it was over, and they might get to business, they should hear a well-known war-whoop; should discover SILOMIO at the table, in for a good hour's speech. Meanwhile he

"Our Artist"—Sir Frank Blockwood, Q.C., M.P.

sat piling notes upon notes, pausing occasionally to cheer COCHRANE, anon humming softly to himself

"Swaziland, my Swaziland!"

UNDER SECRETARY FOR COLONIES deprecated in public interest irregular discussion of question at present time. GORST, hampered by this responsibility, made curiously halting speech. BADEN-POWELL spoke "as one who had been in South Africa"; SQUIRE OF MALWOOD more gravely repeated SYDNEY BUXTON's warning. Now was SILOMIO's time. But before he could move PRINCE ARTHUR was on his feet, positively, with some commonplaces about respecting Ministerial responsibility, consenting to close the conversation!

SILOMIO gasped for breath; instinctively felt for his assegai; clutched at his notes dripping with the gore of SYDNEY BUXTON. When he had partially mastered his emotion the amendment was withdrawn and opportunity had fled.

"*Sic vos non vobis vellera fertis oves,*" said PLUNKET soothingly. "But never mind. You remember that in the end VIRGIL got his own, and BATHYLLUS was basted." SILOMIO stared.

Business done.—SILOMIO contrives a debate and others talk.

Friday Night.—Policemen in lobby much startled by incident that preceded arrival of SPEAKER to resume sittings at nine o'clock. The steady tramp of a column in marching order broke on the ear. Came nearer and nearer from direction of dining-room; swinging doors flung open; Colonel of the Queen's Westminster Volunteers entered. Behind him, in close order, tramped something like score of members. At word of command they took half turn to right and passed into House, as in earlier days another British column swung through the gates of Delhi.

Ten minutes later, more than half the force were observed to come out of the House, look furtively round, and dash off in various directions, some to smoking-room, some to reading-room, and some clear off the premises. But they had done their appointed work, and HOWARD VINCENT, an old campaigner, had secured opportunity for delivering his speech on hostile tariffs and bounties.

Grave doubt at morning sitting whether House could be made for the alluring joy. VINCENT took up position in lobby much as recruiting-sergeant shows himself near Trafalgar Square. Accosted all Members passing by. Offered them free rations and front seats for the lecture if they would stay. Soon picked up enough men to reduce chances of count out. Dinner, I am told, a little exciting, especially towards the end. Several Members discovered straying towards the door. But the ex-captain of the Royal Berks Militia not to be trifled with. Kept them together past the cheese; delivered every man in the House one minute and thirty seconds before the SPEAKER took the Chair. If any skulked out when the Colonel was once embarked on his lecture he, of course, couldn't interfere. But they mustn't suppose their departure wasn't marked. No more free rations for them.

Business done.—By reason of CAWMELL-BANNERMAN's great persuasiveness men and money for Army voted at morning sitting.

SEASIDE MEM.—The Society recently started to abolish Tide-houses will not include Bathing Machines within the scope of its operations.

THE HONEY OF WISDOM.

We Gather the Honey of Wisdom from Thorns, not from Flowers.

NOBILITY OF LIFE.

"Who best can suffer, best can do."
Milton.

WHAT ALONE ENABLES US TO DRAW A JUST MORAL FROM THE TALE OF LIFE?

"Were I asked what best dignifies the present and consecrates the past; what alone enables us to draw a just moral from the Tale of Life; what sheds the purest light upon our reason; what gives the firmest strength to our religion; what is best fitted to soften the heart of man and elevate his soul—I would answer, with Lassus, it is 'EXPERIENCE.'"—Lord Lytton.

Influenza, feverish cold, high temperature and quick pulse.
The great danger of breathing impure air.
Everyone who breathes an impure atmosphere two and a half minutes has every particle of his blood acted on by the vitiated air.
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